

CONGRESSMAN SHERWOOD BOEHLERT (R-NY)
FLOOR STATEMENT ON ENERGY BILL – CAFE AMENDMENT
April 20, 2005

Mr. Chairman:

I rise in strong support of this amendment, which I am offering along with my colleagues, Messrs. Kirk, Platts, Gilchrest, Leach and Shays, as well as Members on the other side of the aisle.

Let me just make several quick points.

First, we can't become less dependent on foreign oil unless we increase the fuel economy of our vehicles. We are importing about 14 million barrels of oil every day. Cars and light trucks consume 9 million barrels of oil every day. We are on a collision course with disaster.

Second, we've been losing ground in fuel economy. We use more gas to drive a mile today than we did 20 years ago.

Third, this amendment would cut U.S. oil consumption by two million barrels a day by 2020 – more of a saving than any single source in this bill.

Fourth, the fuel economy levels in this amendment are based on what the National Academy of Sciences said was feasible – without even taking into account hybrids and without sacrificing safety. The National Academy of Sciences said that fuel economy can be increased “without degradation of safety.” A representative of the Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers confirmed at a recent Science Committee hearing that CAFE increases could be achieved without compromising safety.

Finally, the biggest beneficiary of this amendment will be the consumers. They are sick and tired of paying skyrocketing prices for gasoline. They want relief. This amendment will provide it.

Support this moderate amendment that will help the nation while putting more money in consumers' pockets.